

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this amendment, claims 5, 18-20, 24 and 27-32 are currently pending in the subject application. By the instant amendment, claim 5 is amended to include the limitations of claim 18, and claim 18 has been canceled. The Title of the Invention has been amended to be consistent with the subject matter claimed. Claims 19 and 20 have been amended to reflect the cancellation of claim 18. Claims 5 and 27 are independent. No new matter is added by the instant amendment.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgement of applicants' claim for foreign priority and receipt of a certified copy of the priority document, acceptance of the drawings and consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 12, 2004.

Claims 5, 19-20, 24 and 27-32 are presented to the Examiner for further prosecution on the merits.

A. Introduction

In the outstanding Office action, the Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,307,782 to Sadd et al. ("the Sadd et al. reference"), rejected claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the Sadd et al. reference, objected to claims 18-20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and allowed claims 27-32.

B. Obviation of Art Rejections

In the outstanding Office action, the Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the Sadd et al. reference and rejected claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the Sadd et al. reference. Claim 5 has been

amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 18, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 24 depends from claim 5, and is similarly believed to be allowable. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that these rejections be withdrawn.

C. Allowable Subject Matter

The indication that claims 18-20 contain allowable subject matter and that claims 27-32 are allowed is gratefully acknowledged. Since the previously rejected claims contain the limitations of claim 18, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

D. Conclusion

Since all of the claims now contain subject matter indicated as allowable, claims 5, 10-20, 24 and 27-30 are now in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

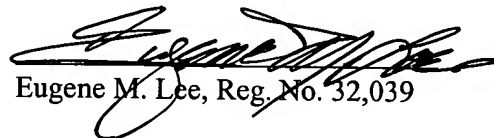
The remaining documents cited by the Examiner were not relied on to reject the claims. Therefore, no comments concerning these documents are considered necessary at this time.

If the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to expedite resolution of any outstanding issues.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this application is earnestly solicited, and an early and favorable further action upon all the claims is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: October 19, 2004


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PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.